



# LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

17 DECEMBER 1976

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# TLS

## THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

FRIDAY • 24 DECEMBER 1976 • No 3,902 • 20p

## Magic and magicians

Debrett  
Limericks  
Chess  
Stereoscopes



Poems by  
John Ashbery,  
Anthony Hecht,  
Richard  
Eberhart

Patricia Highsmith on the Bardin trilogy  
Hugh Greene on Jefferson's nephews

Alan  
Paton on  
Schweitzer



Blues &  
Greens in  
Byzantium

Cause and effect in art  
Aneurin Bevan, Chester Himes,  
J. A. Hobson  
Alexander Pope as social critic  
In search of John Webster

### NORTHERN IRELAND SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD—LIBRARY SERVICE

#### Ballynahinch Headquarters

Applications are invited from qualified librarians for the post of:

Assistant Librarian  
(Central Services) and  
Assistant Librarian  
(Youth Services)

at Library Headquarters, Ballynahinch, Co. Down.  
Salary Scale, £2,922-£3,282 plus £312 supplement.  
Application forms and further details may be obtained from the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### LIBRARIANS

#### LIBRARY ASSISTANT CONSULTING ENGINEERING SPECIALIST

Duties include consulting and specialising in the design and construction of libraries and bookshelves. The position also involves participation in the design and construction of the library's physical environment. The library is open to the public and the specialist is required to advise on the design and construction of the library's physical environment. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### LONDON, W.1

#### ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING

Post held nursing librarian with research, collection and access to books, journals and periodicals. Salary £3,200 per annum. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### HARVESTER

#### BRITISH GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN GUIDES 1885-1980 Now available

### ARCHITECTS OFFICE

#### LIBRARY

Vacancy exists for someone to design and construct a well equipped library for a well known firm. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

#### POWER RESEARCH UNIT

Applications for the post of research officer in the Power Research Unit. The unit is concerned with the study of the physical and chemical properties of power. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### POLYTECHNIC OF THE SOUTH BANK

#### SENIOR LIBRARY ASSISTANT

Applications for the post of senior library assistant. The post holder will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the library. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### PUBLIC & UNIVERSITY

#### WOMEN'S STUDIES

Applications for the post of research officer in the Women's Studies Unit. The unit is concerned with the study of the physical and chemical properties of women. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

#### PRIMARY COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH IN INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Applications are invited for persons to work in the Primary Communications Research Unit. The unit is concerned with the study of the physical and chemical properties of communication. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS SHOULD SEND TO: PERSONNEL OFFICER, UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER, LEICESTER, LE1 7RH.

### VACANT APPOINTMENTS

#### ASSISTANT TO PUBLISHER

The Managing Director of an academic book and journal publisher is seeking an assistant to help with the day-to-day running of the business. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### FOR SALE & WANTED

#### AUTOGRAHS—Two cash prices for autographs of famous authors. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### BOOKS & PRINTS

#### PROVINCIAL BOOKSELLERS

Applications for the post of provincial bookseller. The post holder will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the business. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### MONTHLY BOOK FAIR

#### Kanliworth Hotel, Great Russell Street, London

Monday next 12 noon to 8 p.m.  
Tuesday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### 30 Booksellers display for sale a selection from the Antiquarian and Out of Print Stock. Thousands of Fresh Bargains every month.

### BOOK AUCTIONS, monthly at Tavistock (1976) 200000.

### FOR SALE & WANTED

#### AUTOGRAHS—Two cash prices for autographs of famous authors. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

### BOOKS OLD & NEW

#### OUT-OF-PRINT

Applications for the post of out-of-print bookseller. The post holder will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the business. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

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### PERSONAL

#### IMMEDIATE ADVANCES

Applications for the post of personal advance. The post holder will be responsible for the day-to-day running of the business. Applications should be sent to the Personnel Officer, 18 Windsor Avenue, Belfast BT9 6EF, upon receipt of a STAMPED ADDRESSED FOOLSCAP ENVELOPE. Completed forms should be returned by 4 p.m. on Friday, 31st December, 1976.

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*By David Wagoner*

ase send all trade orders and  
ers from outside the UK to  
J. Brill, Leiden, Holland

Although some highly successful stage illusions have all the appearance of seductive, sophisticated work of an artist—lawyer, or even a multi-millionaire—their implication, catching the viewer by surprise, is turning alive, penetrating with words, sequencing human beings through their own choice, hope, or despair.

Beyond dislocation and loss of control, the number one theme explored in the 1980s by the London magician P. T. Selbit is the equal number fear of hallucination or the fantastic vision wrought by the senses of the viewer or the viewer's dream. Appearing in the 1980s, Selbit's work is colorful and

[illegible]

will tell you (if the mood is  
right).

DR. FLEMING: *Mr. Mystery's  
Secrets of Magic*. 82pp. Boston:  
Atlantic-Lite, Brown. \$5.95

DR. FLEMING: *The Puffin Book  
of Magic*. 128pp. Puffin, Paper-  
back, 40p.

DR. FLEMING: *The Tarbell  
Course in Magic*. 2,653pp. New  
York: Tarbell, 7 volumes, \$15  
each.

DR. GILLY: *Magic as a Perform-  
ing Art*. 232pp. Eppinger, Barker.  
\$7.50.

DR. HAY: *Cyclopedia of Magic*.  
22,440. 498pp. Dover/Constable.  
\$2.90.

DR. HENRIK: *Magic and Show-  
manship*. 1965p. 522pp. Dover/  
Constable. \$2.90.

DR. KRAUS: *Magicians*. 1965p.

[illegible]

Few magicians have written we

## The added d

mind, touch the folds of the sitting  
crinoline, so real are its convolu-  
tions, so palpable its texture. Be-  
hind her there is a great emplimental  
which separates her from the ornate  
sofa in the background, a void  
which there is no hint in the two-  
dimensional photographs. Her  
plump face and hands, her neat  
pocked bodice are embossed  
though they were modelled in wax  
you can see down into the cowl  
of the empty bonnet which she  
holds, the folds of the looped cov-  
tain behind her, the texture of il-  
lolk shawl around her shoulders

Among the many books on uigic printed for the first time or reprinted by Dover—so many, in fact, one suspects there is a magician in the house, and more power to him—two scent of special value and interest to anyone who performs it. Henry Hay's *Cyclopaedia of Magic*, a fascinating assemblage of comments and explanations by many magicians, both living and dead, on nearly all aspects of magic; and a really original and thought-provoking examination of stagecraft sub-

psychology for magicians by H. von Helldorf, *Alte und Neuzeitliche Magie*. But the oldest among them is the most charming and most appealing for performer and layman alike, one of the very few autobiographies of an magician with an appreciable merit whatsoever: the *Mémoires* of Robert-Houdin. In spite of the dubious authenticity of some of the events and achievements the French master tells us about, his broadening involvement in aid contributions to what he called "the amusing science" of magic seem destined to remain on many bookshelves for centuries to come.

As the son of a watchmaker with an interest in automata—those weird forerunners of computers—and an utterly penniless apprentice, another watchmaker in a struggling city, he was given by a corkseller (thank goodness) bookseller, not Bartholdy's *Treatise on Clockmaking*, which he had scraped an acquaintance with, but the *Journal of Scientific Amusement*, an early collection of conjuring tricks. He was eagerly devouring every line

It is hard to write about magic, and it is hard to write about magic books. I beg the indulgence of that hoet of omblate deceiver, the most etrangey neglected of all enter-teners, for any sins of omission or comission. May their futures be full of full houses, and may they all write magically, as the geniuses who have always done so. There is an old trick called "The Extraordinary Production of Eggs from the Mouth" in which the magician extrudes, one by one, a whole bowlful of eggs from that restless aperture. Then, also one at a time, he makes the eggs vanish back where they came from, apparently swelling the mouth, then showing his mouth in about-leted empty. The magic words are *Quod erit demonstrandum.*

One may compare the stereoscopic plot with the maker of waxwork images; one does so with reluctance for waxworks have a corpse-like quality that makes them repellent to the eye, whereas the stereoscope is always pleasing and sometimes enchanting nevertheless in the one art as in the other the perfection of the image has no effect not only of creating but of destroying illusion. When we catch the glossy eye of the waxwork it seems more disquietingly lifeless than any statue and when we probe the inner space of that stereoscopic photograph it becomes more improbable than the rudest sketch.

This particular photograph is one of the most successful—few of the neurological point of view—of the last century. The fact that the camera has looked at a continuous receding surface; where falls is when it has to record a continuous and unexplained recession, as for instance when we see an Egyptian guard seated upon a rock for hours, or a gladiator in the arena of Rome. The intended a grandly odd but the guard looks like a cardboard image set at an immense distance from the color in the background. The effect is less strange than a Kierkegaard figure, but the unexplained recession is not a puppet strolling before an unconscious void.

The figures in the stereoscopic camera world exhibit an asym-

Altogether this book is dallightful and a bargain. In my opinion it would still have been a bargain; at least it would still have been well worth the money if it had been illustrated only by the dyspeptic bewhiskered and too solid figured Henrik Ibsen, Ibsen in the round is monumental, unforgettable and really a little frightening.

**DEAD COPY**  
Murder at the Frankfurt Book Fair  
Hubert Montellhei  
An entertaining thriller of  
intrigues set in the world of  
international publishing.  
\$3.95

**CHRISTOPHER COLUMBES**  
John Stewart Collins  
"a crisp freshness of approach  
...is beautifully written...and it  
settles with content." John  
Raymond, *Sunday Times*  
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# All the president's kin

By Hugh Greene

BOYNTON MERRILL Jr.: Jefferson's Nephews 462pp. Princeton University Press. £12.75.

One of the most famous detectives in American crime fiction, Uncle Abner, the creation of Melville Davisson Post, was a pioneer of wrongdoers in the hills of Virginia in Jefferson's time. The case of Jefferson's nephew, now recounted by Boynton Merrill, might have been made for him. Uncle Abner did his detective work in a little in his hand, he had a nose for evil, for the corruption brought by great wealth, for family secrets, for the influence of the landscape on petty human beings.

This is all in Boynton Merrill's *Jefferson's Nephews*, a drama of the very public downfall of a rich and, at one time in Virginia terms, aristocratic family, ending in material and moral ruin, brutal murder, suicide and a final unmythical mystery. On top of all this the loss scenes are accompanied by natural disaster, by the crash of buildings and forests, the overflow of rivers and lakes in the worst earthquake in American history. Cecil B. de Mille, then should be living at this house.

This is very much a study in the effects of repeated intermarriages between first cousins for generations after generation. The Jefferson, Lewis, and Randolph families were so inextricably mixed together that any attempt at a family tree would be a nightmare. Uncle Abner would have known all about that too. His constant companion in nearly all his cases up and down Virginia was a Squira Randolph. I have tried with the aid of Mr Merrill's voluminous notes to fit the names into this story but without success.

In the absence of Uncle Abner we have a very competent substitute in the form of a family tree. The Jeffersons, Lewises, and Randolphs were all of part of a plantation in Kentucky once owned by the Lewis family before their final collapse. With almost incredible patience and industry he has pieced together nearly every detail of a crime which, in spite of its close connection with Thomas Jefferson, one of the greatest men in American history, had been almost forgotten. We may miss Uncle Abner's flashes of insight. Instead we have Mr Merrill's way with dusty documents.

Sometimes one feels that in his 335 pages of text and nearly 130 pages of appendixes, notes, bibliography and index Mr Merrill goes a bit too far in the accumulation of detail. But the end one is left with a remarkably clear picture of the American frontier at the beginning of the nineteenth century, its towns and villages, its law, its medicine and its violence. It is a social and not a romantic picture. There are no picturesque cowboys quick on the draw. The frontier rifts seem to have been mainly involved in biting off each other's ears and noses and going out each other's eyes.

When Colonel Charles Lewis, who was married to Jefferson's sister, Lucy, had experienced in Virginia the loss of his considerable fortune and what Jefferson himself called "the shipwreck of his fortune" of the whole Lewis family, he decided to seek a new fortune on the western frontier of Kentucky. In 1800, this was the last year of his brother-in-law's second term as president and it seems clear that the reason for his departure was his concern for his own business difficulties back in Virginia and those of his close relatives.

Colonel Lewis emerges as a thoroughly competent character who even dares to sue his own law. He was not entirely kind and merciful. The case was also decided by the drawing of straws by the always-receding frontier and what happened to him and his family in the next three years must have been, at the least, a nightmare. He was, with all his problems, a man who was not a slave to the Kentucky frontier but a man who was a part of it. There were Lewis families made up of slaves, among children, and

ing from infancy in the late teens and some twenty slaves there were horses and other livestock and an absolute minimum of baggage. It is a sign of the toughness of the Americans of that generation that they survived their hardships. But after their arrival on the frontier, death started to strike. The medicine of the time, with its constant resort to laxatives, proved more dangerous than the journey.

The two main actors in the bloody ending to the story were Colonel Lewis's sons, Lilburne and Isham. Isham did not die in the battle of New Orleans, as he was never heard of again. Once again one is suspicious. Isham could easily have spread the rumour himself and continued his life, whether of crime or respectability, under another name. That was the end of the Lewis family in Kentucky. Randolph's son, Lilburne, his children were divided up among various foster-parents, one of them a particularly brutal tavern keeper. Since only a few years before the Lewises had put on such airs there was probably some local satisfaction.

By 1811 Isham was back with his family in Kentucky, having absconded from Mississippi after failing to pay a debt. Lilburne's wife was dead as was the brother's mother, Lucy, and their elder brother, Randolph, who had obviously been the most stable member of the family, Lilburne married again, falling for the beautiful and spoiled belle of the county. She was soon pregnant, and under the burden of financial difficulties and problems with his own children by his first marriage and his dead brother's children, Lilburne began to break up and to drink heavily with Isham. It only needed an insignificant incident to trigger off the tragedy.

Among Lilburne's slaves was a seventeen-year-old boy called George, described as "ill-grown and ill-thrived". On December 15 he was seen in the kitchen, a pitchfork and on his way back dropped and broke the pitcher. Lilburne and Isham dragged him into the kitchen cabin, stretched him out on the floor and bound him. They then called in the other slaves and had them build a fire. It was late at night and in the light of the flames Lilburne picked up an axe and with one blow nearly decapitated George. One of the slaves was then forced to cut up George and feed the pieces into the fire.

Here we come to Cecil B. de Mille. Almost immediately the great earthquake struck. The chimney collapsed and put out the fire before George had been properly consumed. As one tremor followed another, the slaves were ordered to rebuild the fireplace and bid the pieces of bone and flesh in the doorway. According to one account Lilburne called out as the tremors came: "It is only the devil in hell rejoicing over having got hold of George."

As the earthquake went on day after day Lilburne's wife gave birth to her first child—and at last a touch of fate to relieve the grim story—a dog called Nero found George's head and was discovered by a neighbour eating it. Then the murder was done. Lilburne was charged, and later Isham was well. They were both released on bail and, this time, the incident which finally broke Lilburne. So long as Lilburne only had been indicted his wife, Letitia, who had been in the house at the time of the murder, could not be called as a witness against her husband. The situation changed with the indictment of Letitia. Letitia's life was now in danger and she fled with her baby to her father's house.

Lilburne decided to kill himself and set down to write his will in which he addressed Letitia as "my beloved wife". In a postscript he wrote: "My beloved father strikes me as a very black joke indeed. He was obviously in a curious state of exaltation as in an old hope of being with the devil in the hope of being with the devil. He must remember that George was only a black slave."

The next step was to make a

suicide pact with Isham. They took two guns and went to the plot of ground where Lilburne's first wife was buried. The idea was that they would fire simultaneously on the count of three. Isham, however, asked what would happen if one of the guns misfired. Lilburne demonstrated how the survivor could shoot himself, and in the process pulled the trigger and shot himself through the heart—unless, which is what I am tempted to believe, Isham pulled it for him.

Isham was now arrested as an accomplice in two killings and this time was not released on bail. But before he could stand trial he broke out of prison and, apart from a rumour that he had been killed fighting in Jackson's army at the battle of New Orleans, he was never heard of again. Once again one is suspicious. Isham could easily have spread the rumour himself and continued his life, whether of crime or respectability, under another name.

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When one of the great and good is involved, however remote, in a really juicy scandal one is inclined, perhaps, to feel a certain satisfaction. In fact Thomas Jefferson, who was anything but a rich man, seems to have behaved admirably throughout. His thoughts on the case may be deduced from his comments on the suicide of a more famous member of the Lewis family than Lilburne and Isham, Governor Mott. Mott was the son of the Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific coast. He attributed it to "hypochondriacal afflictions" which, he added, were "a constitutional disposition in all the nearer branches of the family of his name". One must be grateful to Boynton Merrill for having rescued this grim footnote to history from oblivion and for having guided us so well through all the twists of a very tangled tale.

## Protester's progress

By T. J. Binyon

STEPHEN F. MILLIKEN: Chester Himes 312pp. Columbia University of Missouri Press. \$11.

Stephen Milliken begins his book by stating his conviction that Chester Himes is "one of the great writers of our time" and he ends it with the conclusion that Himes's work is perhaps

the most complete and perfect statement of the nature of negro American racism to be found in American literature, and one of the most profound statements about the nature of social oppression, and the rage and fear it generates in individuals, in all of modern literature.

The two judgments are obviously not incompatible, but they are not identical, and the shift from one to the other, in the course of Professor Milliken's book, is indicative of the difficulty of the critic as he struggles in dealing with the work of a writer who introduced his latest collection of work with the words:

"These writings are admittedly chauvinistic. You will conclude from your reading that BLACK SEXUALITY and BLACK HETEROSEXUALITY are my two chief obsessions."

Chester Himes began writing in 1932 in Ohio State Penitentiary while serving a two-year sentence for armed robbery. He was released after seven and a half years. His first works were all short stories. Professor Milliken calls attention to their "amazing variety of topics and characters and one wonders whether this might not be partly due to the influence on them of other writers—there seem to be echoes here and there of O. Henry, the early Raymond Chandler, Hammett, even, possibly,



The Teapot Dome scandal, celebrated in the annals of American crime, brought ruin to Albert Bacon Felt, who as President Harding's Secretary of the Interior leased the Teapot Dome oilfields without competitive bidding and pocketed the Republic. Felt was later celebrated graphically by Zero Mostel together with Israel Shenker in their book of Villains (53pp. New York: Doubleday, Paperback, \$2.95), a rogues' gallery photographed by Alex Gottfried of the same famous faces playing many parts, including Jeebelle, the Marquis de Sade, Lord Elgin (a game of marbles) and Alexander Grohmann Bell (for inventing the telephone—though he is "not responsible for busy signals or rock music").

of John P. Marquand. By the 1940s, however, when his best stories were written, Himes had settled down to an unmistakable style of his own.

His first full-length works were two "protest novels", set in wartime California: *If He Hitters Let Him Go* (1945) and *Lonesome Crusade* (1947). Professor Milliken finds both relatively successful, and his undoubtedly right. The emotional force of protest, which comes over so powerfully in the best stories, is strengthened by excessive exclamation in one, and excessive complication in the other.

These were followed by three semi-autobiographical novels: *Cast the First Stone* (1953), which draws on the author's experience in prison and avoids the subject of racism by making the hero "a Mississippi white boy"; *The Third Generation* (1954), in which Himes returns to his childhood and youth; and *The Prizefighter* (1955). This "intricately patterned piece of fiction" in Professor Milliken's words, is apparently Himes's own favourite novel, and it is without doubt his best. It is the story of a week-long, drunken affair between Jassa Rulosova, a black writer, and Kries Cummings, a white woman, which ends when Jesse murders Kries during an alcoholic blackout. It is as much a novel of protest as the two earlier ones, but the protest is a wider one, the hurt which has settled so deep inside Jesse to become "part of his metabolism"—one of Himes's favourite images—is not just the hurt of being a black writer, it is the hurt of being an unsuccessful writer, the hurt of being a human being.

And Jesse's situation, as Professor Milliken points out, is paralleled by that of Kries; the novel expresses Himes's conviction that "the hurts of the white women are at least as deep as those of the black men, and that the hurts are roughly similar, and equally visible, minor, or major." Despite his despair and disillusion, the book is hysterically funny in places, and in Himes

JOHN FRANKLIN BARDIN: The John Franklin Bardin Omnibus 601pp. Penguin. 95p.

Who is John Franklin Bardin?

He is an American, born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1916, is still alive, and occasionally writes popular fiction under the name Gregory Tree. The three novels, however, which form his *Omnibus* were written between 1946 and 1948 to what was surely a strange burst of creative activity, of inspiration with a psychopathic bent. They are *The Deadly Percheron*, *The Lost of Philip Bunter*, and *Devil Take the Blue-Tail Fly*. The last novel is the best. All three make use of what is called split personality or schizophrenia. So persistent is this element that the average reader will probably look again in the introduction to see whether the insanity has not been mentioned that Mr Bardin himself was once an inmate of a mental institution. Mr Bardin was not, but his mother was. A quote from Bardin goes: "Mother had become a paranoid schizophrenic by then. It was on visits to her that I first had an insight into the 'going home' hallucinations." This was when Bardin had to leave university after one year and take a job as a ticket-taker and bouncer at a roller-skating rink. After reading these three novels with their grotesque and morbid elements, one cannot help but wonder at the closeness of his identification with his mother's condition. John Franklin Bardin the author, however, is in control of his material here, and the clarity and excitement give Mr Bardin's works their value.

*The Deadly Percheron* begins, as do all three novels, with an engaging first page. Someone named Joe has hired a young man of twenty-three, for ten dollars a day, to wear a libelous in his hair, and someone named Eustace employs him to give away. A young man, Jacob Blunt, has come to see the psychiatrist Dr George Matthews. "Am I crazy, Doc? Do these men exist?" Blunt asks.

Here is the beginning of madness, in Jacob himself, because the "little man" do exist, as Dr Matthews soon finds out by accompanying Jacob Blunt to a Third Avenue bar where he is to meet one of them. Eustace turns out to be a dwarf in bottle-green velvet jacket, Tottenham's waistcoat and beige broadcloth trousers. Eustace is arrogant to the point of being a nuisance, and he is a bit of a clown. Jacob Blunt has to give him a leg up to the bar stool. Eustace has the upper hand. Jacob is the son of a well-to-do family, was a bit of a delinquent in his youth, but is now well now in an expensive apartment in Manhattan, and has no less than two good-looking girlfriends, as Dr Matthews discovers. Why should Jacob let himself be hired out to do such silly things as wear a flower in his hair and give away quinine? Dr Matthews suggests to a student a certain Manhattan address, the house being tied to a lampost while Jacob rings the bell? What is behind it all? Who is making money out of it, who needs any money? What is the motive?

The reader may well wonder for a hundred pages or so, while the story slowly begins to run away with the author. Dr Matthews, in the hero for most of the book, suffers amnesia after being knocked down by a lorry, then undergoes electro-shock treatment (then a new and monstrous therapy) to a state in which he is significant in terms of Mr Bardin's attitude towards the medical profession that Matthews hangs on to or recovers his real identity as Matthews, but must let it go very out of a local girl playing along with the hospital who do not believe him. Matthews, now with a dreadful scar over his nose and down his face, lowers his social status, to become a husband at a Coney Island cafeteria, has a casual affair with a local girl, and postpones looking up his wife Sara for fear that his scar will shock her and make her desert him. But there are always more complicated than this in Mr Bardin's novels.

Anthony Price's *Wag Game* 256pp. Gollancz. 13.75.

The thrust of Anthony Price's thriller lies not in an abundance of technical detail, or a large ratio of sex and violence, but in the stunning ingenuity of their plots; they are perhaps the most intellectually satisfying thrillers of recent years. They are slightly artificial, in that the subtle and devious thoughts of the heroes, who scorn anything less complicated than a triple bluff, necessarily presuppose an equal subtlety and deviousness in the actions of their adversaries: a premise which gives the novels some force for complexity, but does not allow for the brutal simplicity occasionally demonstrated by life. In *Wag Game*, the author's most brilliant and exciting mixture of twentieth-century history and present-day politics. A re-enactment of a Civil War battle leaves one real corpse among the dead and wounded: Charles Batcliffe, revolutionary and founder editor of *The Red Star*, announces that he has discovered a ton of gold in his home, Stendeham Castle, where he was hidden by Cromwell's soldiers in 1643. Dr Audley, joint back from consultations with the CIA to Washington, is given the task of finding a co-operation between the two sides, and of making sure that the Red Star cannot use his gold to further its political ends. Bob Anthony Price and Dr Audley give masterly performances.

It is as well as what is present, with an objectivity that is unusual in a novel. When contact is again made with Eustace, and with Sara, we learn via Sara that she had all this time been instructed by Matthews to rent an apartment in a building where she can keep track of the culprits. Half Matthews's mind, even in Coney Island, does not know what the other half is doing. The plot is indeed hard to hang on to, especially as Mr Bardin is inclined to go into a flashback without giving too much warning.

## The glint of madness

By Patricia Highsmith

It is past, as well as what is present, with an objectivity that is unusual in a novel. When contact is again made with Eustace, and with Sara, we learn via Sara that she had all this time been instructed by Matthews to rent an apartment in a building where she can keep track of the culprits. Half Matthews's mind, even in Coney Island, does not know what the other half is doing. The plot is indeed hard to hang on to, especially as Mr Bardin is inclined to go into a flashback without giving too much warning.

At the end Eustace is revealed as half-brother of Jacob Blunt (they had the same father), and the final chapter is crammed with paragraphs of hastily delivered information, its delivery made all the more unlikely because of the fact that the hero is standing on a whirling disc in a fun-palace, liable to be flung off into space by Eustace who is at the controls. After Eustace has told his story the book is finished with a war, reminiscent of his father's rejection of him. Matthews is hired out to a mental institution. Mr Bardin was not, but his mother was. A quote from Bardin goes: "Mother had become a paranoid schizophrenic by then. It was on visits to her that I first had an insight into the 'going home' hallucinations." This was when Bardin had to leave university after one year and take a job as a ticket-taker and bouncer at a roller-skating rink. After reading these three novels with their grotesque and morbid elements, one cannot help but wonder at the closeness of his identification with his mother's condition. John Franklin Bardin the author, however, is in control of his material here, and the clarity and excitement give Mr Bardin's works their value.

The *Lost of Philip Bunter* concerns a personable advertising copywriter, married man who drinks too much and is subject to blackouts. In his office one morning he discovers in his typewriter some fifteen pages of what might be his own diary, except that he did feel unwell, and he "saw" go day or so into the future. How did the information come forth? Who wrote it? This is Poe-like, and again a story of split-personality, split-motivation, a guessing game of who did what and why. Philip is married to Dorothy, but hardly faithful, especially after he has met Brent through a friend called Jeremy. Jeremy has his eye on Dorothy, which is why he introduced Philip to Brent. There is also Stephen Foster, not the composer of *Old Folks at Home*, but the father of Dorothy, out to protect Dorothy, and in vent his wrath on the self-indulgent Philip. The tangle is unravelled at the end.

More intense and inspired is *Devil Take the Blue-Tail Fly*, written in six weeks and never changed from its first draft. The story is seen through the eyes of a woman, a professional horse-chandler, who is being released from a mental hospital (again) where the book begins. She returns to her potentially happy and comfortable existence with her husband Basil, a conductor of increasing fame. The horse-chandler is in the house, but Ellen cannot find the key. Philip Blunt finds it in the lock of the instrument itself, where it should be. Ellen lurches with her husband's sister Nancy in Manhattan, and who should turn up at Nancy's flat but Jim Shiel, a handsome and well-known folk-singer with a guitar, and with whom Ellen had an affair while still a schoolgirl.

It is impossible to narrate Mr Bardin's "plots", though to do so would not spoil the pleasure of reading the novels. We see Ellen at a boarding-school girl hardly just pigtail age, sneaking off alone to visit the roadside nightspot where Jim Shiel sings. When I was young I used to visit On Masso and give him a plate, and miss the bottle when he got dry. And brush away the blue-tail fly.

After *Outsider* in Amsterdam, Janwillem van de Wetering's outstanding first novel, which is a rather a disappointment. The murder, that of a high-class whore found with a commode dagger in her back on the floor of her house-hoost in Amsterdam, is one of those annoying crimes which solves itself without any detection: there is a lot of irrelevant material, and detective Grijpstra and de Gier are in danger of becoming as nauseatingly cosy as television's Starkey and Hutch. A pleasant read, though, with an occasional, if pointless, side trip to Corcego.

Malgré's Christmas 326pp. Hamish Hamilton. £4.95.

*Malgré's Christmas* is a collection of nine short stories by Simonon, in eight of which is a patron figure; in the ninth he is represented by Jennifer. In the title story, Mr and Mrs Malgré are celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversary. Malgré, a brilliant and exciting mixture of twentieth-century history and present-day politics. A re-enactment of a Civil War battle leaves one real corpse among the dead and wounded: Charles Batcliffe, revolutionary and founder editor of *The Red Star*, announces that he has discovered a ton of gold in his home, Stendeham Castle, where he was hidden by Cromwell's soldiers in 1643. Dr Audley, joint back from consultations with the CIA to Washington, is given the task of finding a co-operation between the two sides, and of making sure that the Red Star cannot use his gold to further its political ends. Bob Anthony Price and Dr Audley give masterly performances.

Inspector Ghote's latest case takes him into the middle of Bollywood. He is called in to investigate a case when a five-foot light falls from a canopy onto the head of Dhirendra, the famous villain, whose latest role is that of Magab in the Telugu film *Throne of Blood*, adapted from William Shakespeare by Dr Arvind Bharti. The rarefied atmosphere of the superstar world goes to Ghote's head; he finds it hard to stick to the story

He picks her up at the bar—nothing out of the ordinary, but hardly fun, either—and seduces her that same evening. Past blands with future. What hotel room was it? Was it the one with the brown-varnished door, the fire-escape window out of which Ellen climbed, jumping her feet to street level? Jim ley with his head bashed in, seen by Ellen, but was it in the rented room, or in a hotel room? Did Ellen do it, or did she simply climb out of bed and see what someone else had done?

Ellen has an alter ego whom she calls Nellie. Nellie is evil, more crude and vigorous than Ellen, pleasant sometimes in toils with Ellen and Basil. Ellen attempts to resound her career as horse-chandler, plays passably well, but her best friends inform her after the performance that she has lost the artist's gift. Mr Bardin is brilliant, as good as Dickens, in describing an aged critical lunk, so decrepit that his seated and even standing figure resembles a question-mark. On the evening of her new debut as concert artist, Ellen sees Basil retreating into an alcove of the apartment with Vanessa, an unborn-haired woman whom Ellen has suspected is Basil's new love. Now Ellen is sure, and she sits down and plays, for the small audience at the reception, over the head with the music of the Goldberg Variations but in a chorus from "The Blue-Tail Fly".

It is indeed lost reality, a disillusion about one's own identity, as the cover of the *Omnibus* illustrates: a man's distorted face shows four eyes, five if one looks closely, a mouth extraordinarily wide and perched in horror, yet silent-seeming, if unable to utter anything but a bewildered moan. Mr Bardin identifies with male heroes in the first

And brush away the blue-tail fly.

## Criminal proceedings

JANWILLEM VAN DE WETERING: Tumbleweed 180pp. Heinemann. £3.50.

After *Outsider* in Amsterdam, Janwillem van de Wetering's outstanding first novel, which is a rather a disappointment. The murder, that of a high-class whore found with a commode dagger in her back on the floor of her house-hoost in Amsterdam, is one of those annoying crimes which solves itself without any detection: there is a lot of irrelevant material, and detective Grijpstra and de Gier are in danger of becoming as nauseatingly cosy as television's Starkey and Hutch. A pleasant read, though, with an occasional, if pointless, side trip to Corcego.

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two novels, and uncannily well with a woman in the third and last. Black, blackness are words that recur in *Blue-Tail Fly* in connection with sex, urgency, surrender. The best-remembered of all the words, however, but was written by a doctor about a genuine case. Some of Ellen's aggressive thoughts, externalized by Nellie, sound like the tape-recordings of "Sybil".

Dr Danzer has never understood you for all his big words and fancy ideas. He hasn't helped you either. You are just the same as you always were, Ellen. . . . But I'm always there, Ellen, when you need me, whether you admit it or not. . . . I who am your better part! You can't live without me, Ellen, and you know it.

There is the real plot of madness here, and a split in the face of authority and what is called the normal. The end of *Blue-Tail Fly* is tragic. Basil gives up Nellie, so Ellen has become more real than Ellen. Ellen talks to Nellie. Nellie is stronger. Mr Bardin seems to have an important message, according to his lights, and it is most depressing. On the next-to-last page, Ellen is trying to crawl over the bars of the bears' cage in the New York zoo, and Basil is trying to stop her, to catch her. But it is Basil who falls into the pit, and wins will be killed. By now, Ellen and Nellie are separate but split, even if Nellie is visible only to Ellen. As her husband dies, Ellen recalls the room in which Shiel, the singer, ran in horror toward Nellie instead of to her, and then Nellie began to hit Jim Shiel over the head with the music of a lamp, while Ellen watched.

We have all had these feelings, more or less, and now end then. The healthier among us try to step back from the brink, try to laugh at what might have happened if we had gone a bit further. The reader of these roles will read in horror those who can take it. And they will not forget very soon.

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The thrust of Anthony Price's thriller lies not in an abundance of technical detail, or a large ratio of sex and violence, but in the stunning ingenuity of their plots; they are perhaps the most intellectually satisfying thrillers of recent years. They are slightly artificial, in that the subtle and devious thoughts of the heroes, who scorn anything less complicated than a triple bluff, necessarily presuppose an equal subtlety and deviousness in the actions of their adversaries: a premise which gives the novels some force for complexity, but does not allow for the brutal simplicity occasionally demonstrated by life. In *Wag Game*, the author's most brilliant and exciting mixture of twentieth-century history and present-day politics. A re-enactment of a Civil War battle leaves one real corpse among the dead and wounded: Charles Batcliffe, revolutionary and founder editor of *The Red Star*, announces that he has discovered a ton of gold in his home, Stendeham Castle, where he was hidden by Cromwell's soldiers in 1643. Dr Audley, joint back from consultations with the CIA to Washington, is given the task of finding a co-operation between the two sides, and of making sure that the Red Star cannot use his gold to further its political ends. Bob Anthony Price and Dr Audley give masterly performances.

Malgré's Christmas 326pp. Hamish Hamilton. £4.95.

*Malgré's Christmas* is a collection of nine short stories by Simonon, in eight of which is a patron figure; in the ninth he is represented by Jennifer. In the title story, Mr and Mrs Malgré are celebrating their twenty-fifth anniversary. Malgré, a brilliant and exciting mixture of twentieth-century history and present-day politics. A re-enactment of a Civil War battle leaves one real corpse among the dead and wounded: Charles Batcliffe, revolutionary and founder editor of *The Red Star*, announces that he has discovered a ton of gold in his home, Stendeham Castle, where he was hidden by Cromwell's soldiers in 1643. Dr Audley, joint back from consultations with the CIA to Washington, is given the task of finding a co-operation between the two sides, and of making sure that the Red Star cannot use his gold to further its political ends. Bob Anthony Price and Dr Audley give masterly performances.

Inspector Ghote's latest case takes him into the middle of Bollywood. He is called in to investigate a case when a five-foot light falls from a canopy onto the head of Dhirendra, the famous villain, whose latest role is that of Magab in the Telugu film *Throne of Blood*, adapted from William Shakespeare by Dr Arvind Bharti. The rarefied atmosphere of the superstar world goes to Ghote's head; he finds it hard to stick to the story

and sober moods of Dr Hans Cross, laid down in his famous work on criminal investigation, edited by J. Collier Adam, Police Prosecutor, Madras, in 1924. Though the background is as rich and funny as in any of the previous Inspector Ghote novels, as a whole the book is slightly disappointing. A Ghoté at the mercy of events is a less satisfying figure than the underprivileged, but terrible-like Ghoté we have come to admire.

JOHN BUXTON HILTON: Gantokeer's Gollows 191pp. Macmillan. £2.95.

It is 1877, and Sergeant Brant, of the Derbyshire police, is on his way by the Cromford and High Peak Railway (thirty-three miles in five and a half hours) to the tiny village of Piper's Fold in order to investigate the disappearance of a young woman, as a whole the book is slightly disappointing. A Ghoté at the mercy of events is a less satisfying figure than the underprivileged, but terrible-like Ghoté we have come to admire.

We have all had these feelings, more or less, and now end then. The healthier among us try to step back from the brink, try to laugh at what might have happened if we had gone a bit further. The reader of these roles will read in horror those who can take it. And they will not forget very soon.

And brush away the blue-tail fly.

## Criminal proceedings

JANWILLEM VAN DE WETERING: Tumbleweed 180pp. Heinemann. £3.50.

After *Outsider* in Amsterdam, Janwillem van de Wetering's outstanding first novel, which is a rather a disappointment. The murder, that of a high-class whore found with a commode dagger in her back on the floor of her house-hoost in Amsterdam, is one of those annoying crimes which solves itself without any detection: there is a lot of irrelevant material, and detective Grijpstra and de Gier are in danger of becoming as nauseatingly cosy as television's Starkey and Hutch. A pleasant read, though, with an occasional, if pointless, side trip to Corcego.

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*Malgré's Christmas* is

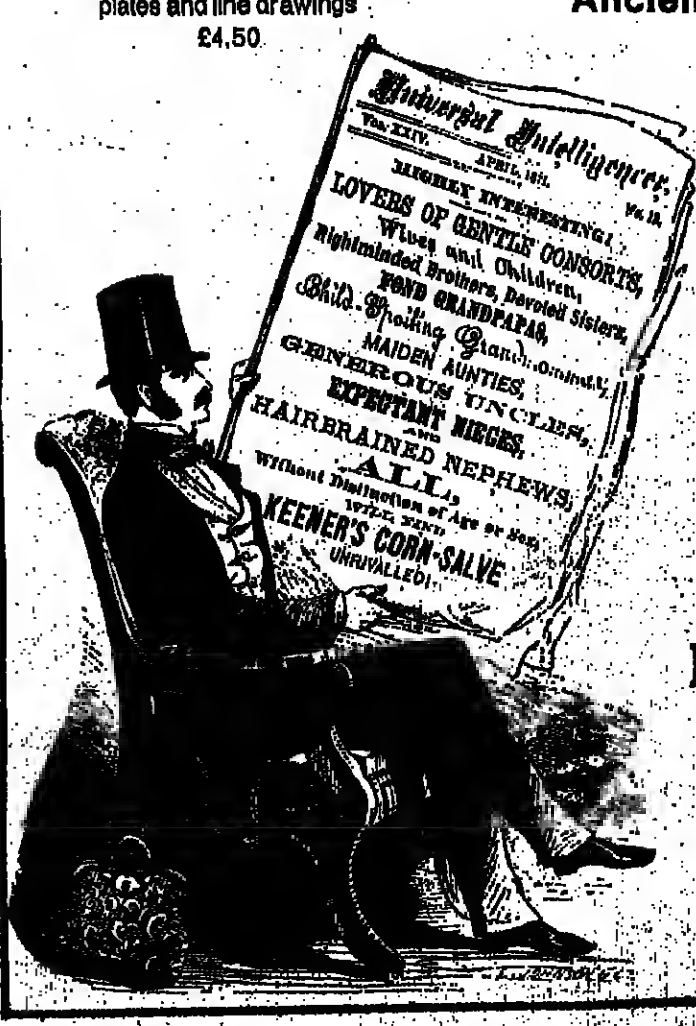






**By Milton Gendel**

—Michael Joseph

















[illegible]

# Anthony Hecht

**DAVID MARSHALL LAMONT** The *Guardian* was published earlier year.

**COLIN MACLEOD**, Jr., a Student, **Chris Church, Oxford.**

**DONALD MATHIAS** is the author of *Ideology in Society, 1960-1970: Ages and Stages, 1978.*

**DAVID MARTIN** is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics.

**K. O. MORRIS's books:** *Lloyd George, 1974; and Herdrie, 1975.*

ALAN PATON's recent books include *The Long View*, 1969, and *Apocalypse and the Archbishop*, 1973.

CHRISTOPHER PERRINS is the author of *Birds*, 1974.

G. S. ROUSSEAU is the author (with Marjorie Hope Nicholson) of *The Long Disease, My Life: Alexander Pope and the Sciences*.

T. A. SHIFFRYS is the author of *O English Verse*, 1972.

C. H. SISON's *Archives* was published earlier this year.

BRIAN STROCK's books include *Medieval Latin Lyrics*, 1971, and *Medieval Science in the Twelfth Century*, 1973.

MARTIN TURNELL is the author *Jean Racine: Dramatist*, 1972.

R. S. TURNER's *Amazing Grace* was published last year.

DAVID WAGMONER's *Collected Poems 1956-1976* was published earlier this year.

D. C. WATT is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics.

PAUL WHITES is Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Criminology Studies at the University of Sheffield.

GERALD ABRAHAM's books include *Slovakian and Romantic Music*, 1968, and *The Tradition of Western Music*, 1974.

MICHAEL BAKANDALL is the author of *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy*, 1972.

QUENTIN BELL's *On Human Finery* was recently published as a new edition.

T. J. BINYON is the author of *A Soviet Versus Reader*, 1974.

DAVID BROWNHILL teaches English at Yale University.

ROBERT BROWNNINO's *The Emperor Julian* was published earlier this year.

ALAN CHALFONT's books include *The Sword and the Spirit*, 1965, and *The Great Commanders*, 1973.

JOAN CHUBBELL is the author of *Schumann Piano Music*, 1972.

PETER CONRAD's *The Tricornered Treasure-House* was published in 1972.

J. D. DIAGOL is the author of *The Phænon of Euripides*, 1970.

SIMON DIOLEY is the author of *War Horse and Elephant in the Delhi Sultanate*, 1973.

MYRIAM EDMOND is writing a book on the lives of miniaturists and large-scale decorative painters working in London in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

GAVIN EWART's *No Pool Like an Old Pool* was published earlier this year.

SIX PEAKS FRASER DARLING's most recent books are *The Nature of a National Park*, 1968, and *Impacts of Man on the Biosphere*, 1969.

MILTON GORDON is the editor of the eighteen-volume series on the great monuments published by Newsweek Books.

SIR HUGH GREENE's recent books include *The Future of Broadcasting in Britain*, 1972, and *The Crooked Counter*, 1973.

HUGH HAUGHTON is a Lecturer in English at the University of York.

PAUL IGNOTUS is the author of *The Paradox of Manassas*, 1967.

DAVID MARSHALL LANGE's *The Bulgarians* was published earlier this year.

COLIN MACLEOD is a Student of Christ Church, Oxford.

DONALD MACRAE is the author of *Ideology and Society*, 1960, and *Agas and Stages*, 1973.

DAVID MARTIN is Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics.

K. O. MORRISON's books include *Lloyd George*, 1974, and *Ker Harle*, 1975.



















